



Project EX

PROVEN RESULTS

- Project EX participants maintained a 17% quit rate 5 months after the program's quit day compared to 8% of the control group
- Project EX participants in another trial maintained a 16% quit rate 8 months after the program's quit day (6 months post-program)



Project EX is a school-based, tobacco-use cessation program for high school youth 14 to 19 years of age. The program is delivered in a clinic setting and involves enjoyable, motivating activities including games, talk shows, and alternative exercises such as yoga. At the completion of this program, youth will be able to—

- Stop or reduce cigarette smoking
- State accurate information about the environmental, social, physiological, and emotional consequences of tobacco use

The eight-session curriculum is delivered over a 6-week period and emphasizes coping with stress, dealing with nicotine withdrawal, relaxation techniques, and avoiding relapse. It aims to teach self-control, anger management, mood management, and goal-setting techniques and provides self-esteem enhancement. Project EX uses motivation to teach students how their smoking behaviors are opposed to their own fundamental values, self-beliefs, and basic life goals. Students participating in Project EX will gain accurate knowledge of tobacco addiction and disease and will develop an empathetic understanding of the effects of tobacco use. The program builds interpersonal, coping, commitment-building, and decisionmaking skills, and provides training in self-control.

INTENDED POPULATION

Project EX was developed for high school youth who currently use tobacco. The program evaluation reviewed by NREPP* was implemented with African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, and White youth, 14 to 19 years of age, in suburban and urban locations. Project EX has been implemented with youth in Wuhan, China and has been translated into Mandarin. A classroom-based version of Project EX is currently being replicated with youth in alternative high schools.

HOW IT WORKS

Project EX consists of eight 40- to 45-minute sessions that are delivered over 6 weeks—two sessions per week for 2 weeks, followed by one session per week for 4 weeks. During the first four sessions, students are not asked or required to quit immediately, but are strengthened for their attempt to quit, which occurs between sessions 4 and 6. The last four sessions, held once per week, focus on students maintaining their nonsmoking status and enhancing their quit attempt.

Program facilitators recruit students by visiting classrooms and making a short presentation, offering elective class credits and class release time, and/or by teacher and student referral. Participant groups can contain



OUTCOMES

At 3-month followup, 17% of youth in the two treatment conditions reported having quit smoking for at least 30 days compared with only 8% of those in the control condition. This includes attrition rates and is adjusted based on carbon monoxide readings that corrected 15% over reporting of quitting.

8 to 15 students per clinic, but up to four clinics may operate simultaneously in one school. Students use an interactive curriculum to examine the difference between habits and addictions, how tobacco use actually increases stress, and how it is easier to quit while one is younger.

Project EX involves exercises such as healthy breathing, yoga and meditation, relaxation, and motivating games and discussions. The motivational theory-driven “talk-show” activity, patterned after popular television shows such as *Oprah*, is highly ranked by students. Students volunteer to role-play talk show “guests,” the teacher/facilitator acts as “host,” and the class is the audience. After some defining information about the “guest” is presented, the “audience” interacts with the “guest” on their personal smoking-related issues. The “talk-show” activity is used during four of the eight program sessions.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

The Project EX curriculum guide and student workbook should be followed closely and all eight sessions delivered. To be eligible for the EX clinic, a student must have used tobacco in the 30 days prior to the first session and must join the clinic on or before the fourth session. Highly motivated classroom teachers or health educators should implement Project EX. The Project EX CD-ROM, which contains yoga and other relaxation activities, should be used to help ensure program fidelity.

PROGRAM DEVELOPERS

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* National Registry of Effective Programs and Practices

Program detail and citations can be obtained at
<http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov>

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